A Yule Mythos

From "The Mystery of the Bards: The Book of the Fool"

The Bard

"Hey! Wake up there!"

The Fool opened His eyes, stretched, and rolled over on the soft grass of the Summerland.

"I suppose you're talking to me?" he murmured.

"I certainly am!" The Lady, shimmering in Her Aspect as the Goddess of Love, smiled at Him. Had He been human, that smile would have sent Him into a transport of happiness. As it was, He felt a little shiver of joy run on catfeet down his spine.

"What's up?" He got to His feet, brushing back his hair.

"What's up? WHAT'S UP?" The Lady looked at Him in disbelief. "Dummy! It's almost Your birthday!"

The Fool looked puzzled for a moment. "My birthday? I thought We have been...for always. We don't -have- birthdays, do we?"

The Lady grinned, shifting into the Nymph for a delightful moment. "No, we don't, but Humanity likes to give Us birthday parties, and yours is probably the biggest...so you need to get moving!"

"So I do! And this Aspect is probably one of my favorites!" The Fool jumped in the air, landing on His hands in a perfect handstand with a jingling of bells. Then he took His hands off the ground, and hung suspended, upside down, in mid-air. One leg was folded at the knee.

"Can You stand on Your head?" He grinned.

"Not with -this- dress on!" She laughed.

Humming a tuneless melody. the Fool strode through Summerland, and through the cloudy space between the Worlds of the MultiVerse, finally ending up on a small, very green-and-blue planet that the natives called "the Earth."

"It's My Birthday a-comin'!" He shouted, and there was a stirring, and a movement. The Life that was locked in the grip of Winter remembered that Spring would come, as it always will, and the half of the world that was in Summer gave a little quiver of happiness.

He went to a Place, and put on the suit, and the Aspect to fit it. He hitched the nine animals to His sleigh, grooming them with loving hands. Then He loaded it with gifts for all the people of the Earth. He was helped by quite a lot of the smaller elves, who found the game most enjoyable. Most of these gifts were toys, but many of them were practical, useful things. Some, like Love, and Peace, and Happiness, were quite insubstantial...but they were His Gifts nonetheless.

He laughed. No longer slim, but chunky (if not fat), and dressed in a red suit lined with white fur, His laughter was a "Ho! Ho! Ho!" of gladness that rolled over the Earth.

He spent the next instant of Time ("And what a clever concept Time is," He thought in self-congratulation) delivering His gifts, riding the sleigh to the music of tiny bells through the Night.

"Good Yule! Merry Christmas! Happy Hanukka! Io Saturnalia! Hail Mithras! Welcome Cernunnos!" He shouted.

"And a Happy Birthday to Me," He added under His breath, with a grin.

He landed the sleigh, and unhitched His animals. Each one was Named, and each one nuzzled Him as an old friend. The last was younger then the rest, and full of energy, bounding across the Place like a puppy in a warm kitchen. The red light from his nose reflected on the snow, and gave a joyful light that lit the sky in a glowing aurora.

The Fool laughed at the sight, and hung up His suit, and took off the Aspect, and returned to the Summerland over the paths He knew so well.

"Well," She said, "Did everything go all right?"

The Fool leaned back against a tree and watched a butterfly land on His nose. "Yep. Got all My presents delivered. Did the usual sleigh-and-reindeer thing with the red suit and all...great fun! I sure like to see the children happy."

"Well, You sure are bass-ackwards sometimes!" The Lady shook Her finger at Him in mock anger.

"Huh? Whattya mean?" The Fool was puzzled.

"Well...everybody else -gets- presents for their birthdays. You gotta reverse it and give presents away!"

The Fool giggled, and said, "That's my Nature, dearest. By the way, your fly's open."

The Lady looked down and reached to zip up Her fly, and then did a perfect double-take.

"But...I don't -have- a fly!"

And the Fool leaned back against the World Tree and laughed and laughed and laughed.

Thus it was, and so it is, and evermore shall be so!

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